



Environmental News

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**EPA ADMINISTRATOR WHITMAN ANNOUNCES \$38 MILLION
TO MAKE ABANDONED PROPERTIES THRIVE**

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christie Whitman, today in a ceremony with Mayor Anthony Williams, selected the District of Columbia for a \$100,000 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot to supplement the process of assessing the contamination of abandoned properties in the District. In addition, around the country more than 90 communities received funding of more than \$38 million for Brownfields assessment and cleanup.

At an event with Mayor Williams at the Brentwood Impoundment Facility in northeast Washington, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman said, "This year we've included provisions for the evaluation, protection and preservation of "greenspace" – parks, playgrounds, trails, gardens, habitat restoration, and open space. Rather than continue to neglect these abandoned properties, these grants spur partnerships among state, local, community groups, investors and developers to create jobs and get the work done."

Whitman added, "Since its inception in 1993, the brownfields program has provided over \$162 million in grants with \$2.9 billion leveraged and over 11,000 jobs created."

The ultimate goal of the District's effort is to develop a long-term self sustaining and efficient program that will include: a Brownfields inventory, a system for tracking clean-up activities, a streamlined approach to permitting, and technical and financial assistance regarding site assessment and cleanup. To date, at least five brownfields sites are being developed. Even though these assessments were not funded by EPA, the Brownfields pilot helped to leverage resources for the assessment and cleanup of these properties. Of these five, three will be completed by EPA through the Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program.

These critical start-up funds often make the difference for many developers to choose to clean up unused properties. Applications are received from cities, counties, tribes, and states to safely restore and promote sustainable reuse of neglected properties. The selection of these pilots provide critical support for assessment and low interest clean up loans to businesses to leverage funds for the redevelopment of these properties and the generation of jobs and tax revenues.

Today's announcement has a variety of categories for funding including 36 new Brownfields Assessment Pilot Grants totaling over \$7 million to evaluate contaminated sites; more than \$5 million to continue and expand brownfields assessment on existing sites; \$26 million in Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund pilots for 46 communities. Information about Brownfields is available at:
www.epa.gov/brownfields.